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A-ONE #0710   03/04/05

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->From the Editor's Keyboard   "Saying it like it is!"
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""

Despite another nasty snow storm this past week, and another one on the way
this weekend (I'm really sick of this stuff now!), it wasn't a bad week
overall. Yeah, work is still crazy as ever - not enough time to get
everything done that needs doing - but it wasn't one of those typical 'rip
your hair out' stressful weeks, for a change. Maybe it's because the
calendar depicts Spring as getting closer. Oh, I can't wait to feel the
warm sun without being bundled up in multiple layers of clothing!

I could ramble on about the pending season, but I won't - not with all of
this snow sitting on the ground. I've run out of time to continue checking
out the annals of Atari highlights of the past, but I have not forgot. We'll
recapture them soon. So, curl up next to the fire, kick your shoes off, and
enjoy this week's issue.

Until next time...

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New ARAnyM Release

Petr Stehlik has announced:

This major release (0.9.0beta2) brings first real working MMU
implementation plus several new cool features and fixes. Now you can run
MiNT with memory protection enabled, and even boot Linux/m68k!

http://aranym.atari.org/

TeraDesk 3.50 Released

After a delay, caused by temporary inaccessibility of the server on which

the web page resides, version 3.50 of TeraDesk open-source desktop is
available at:

        http://solair.eunet.yu/~vdjole/teradesk.htm

TeraDesk is currently the only open-source desktop available for 16-bit and
32-bit Atari computers. Developers' goal has been to maintain TeraDesk as a
small, simple, fast and reliable desktop, which would be functional and
competitive in the modern multitasking environments and all flavours and
versions of TOS-compatible operating system(s), while keeping, as much as
reasonable, familiarity with the original TOS desktop.

Several new features have been added since the last published version, and
also some bug-fixes. See the history file for details.

Have fun.

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                        PEOPLE ARE TALKING
                      compiled by Joe Mirando
                        joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone, and the
messages on the UseNet are fewer and farther between. I keep hoping that
the message traffic will pick up... and occasionally it does... but
let's face it get general trend is downward.

I guess it's to be expected, since Atari hasn't made a computer in years,
but I still hang on the the idea that there are plenty of others who
realize exactly how good a machine the ST was, and who have a special
place in their hearts for it as I do.

I keep thinking back to the days when the 520 was the new whiz-bang
machine on the block and the 1040 was about to stand the industry on its
ear. Yep, while we had color and graphics IBM owners (at the time, ALL
personal computers were called "PCs" and IBM was the only one using DOS)
had to buy graphics and sound cards to get them to where we were
out-of-the-box. The industry was in love with the ST, and software
developers jumped in with both feet...

Until SOMEONE let the water out of the pool.

Yes, there were a lot of mistakes made, and some of them were made right
from the start. Just as truth is a three-edged sword, so is economy a
blessing and a curse. On the one hand, the economy of design allowed for
a very affordable, very usable machine. On the other hand, it made it
almost impossible to upgrade the machine. And if there's one thing
that's true about computers, it's that technology makes them old fast.

But that problem could have been overcome had Atari had the resources and
corporate will to keep advancing the ST line. Instead, they simply
dropped the price some more. While that made things easy for people like
me, who were happy with the ST as it was, it's not what the industry go

'round.

So the ST line (all the way up through the TT) was a great idea. I think
we can all agree on that. And you know what? That's enough for me. Even
today, when I think of my ST computers, I think of the good times I had
while using them. Blasting aliens, balancing my checkbook,
telecommunicating, going to user group meetings, and all of the friends
I've made at various shows. I've been lucky to have the breaks that I
have. I found a hobby that I could afford and a bunch of friends to
share it with.

So no matter how scarce the messages get, I'll be here to laugh, cry, and
commiserate with you.

Okay, enough of that. Let's get to the news, hints, tips and info from
the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
===================================

Mario Koezema asks about SIMMs for his new Mega STE:

"Yesterday I've bought a Atari Mega STE. I don't know what simm modules
must be used in the STE, but I found 2 pair of simm's in it.

The first pair has 2 ic's with the code: TC514400ASJ-70 and one with:
TC511000A-J70

The second pair has 8 ic's with the code: TMS4C1024-80N. Is this the
correct setting?"

Andy Ball tells Mario:

"Nice machine that. Did it come with a hard disk?

Those [the 2 chip SIMMS] will be 1M x 4 bits each.

[The other is] 1M x 1 bit, used to store parity information in some
microcomputers, but probably ignored in the MegaSTE. Each of these two
SIMMs are 1M x one byte wide, so this first pair gives you 2 Megabytes."

Mario tells Andy:

"Thanks for the information. The Mega STE works great, and has a 48MB
Seagate Hard disk.The Mega STE looks like new!!! I've bought the Mega STE
included a SM144 monochrome monitor."

Andy replies:

"I really like the high-res mono mode, especially on the pin-
sharp Atari SM125 that I used to use. I don't think I have
tried an SM144, but I'm glad that you got the mono monitor."

Greg Goodwin adds:

"It would be nice if single gun (monochrome) monitors were easier to find. The picture is certainly clearer...

Perhaps I should clarify. I have sufficient SM124 monitors. What would be useful would be monochrome XVGA. A single electron gun for monochrome is sharper than the three color guns, and I believe that some folk (like myself) would happily use a small monochrome monitor. 1600x1200 is a bit fuzzy on my 19 inch monitor (so I use 1280x960), but 1600x1200 could be very sharp on a 17" monochrome."

'Augustus' asks:

"I read something about "Jenie" or "Jenee" (many months ago....) - is this an OS?"

Greg Goodwin tells Augustus:

"Jinnee is a desktop replacement, much like NeoDesk 4 or Thing. Jinnee is powerful, but feels slow on a ST. I'd recommend using Jinnee on a Falcon or higher."

'Bud' asks about my personal choice of Desktops:

"I recently upgraded NeoDesk with the latest patch to .004 for Neodesk4 and now the Install/remove desktop icon dialog does not appear except briefly and then goes blank with the cursor flashing. All other panels, dialogs and drop down menus work correctly.

Just to be sure that no mixed files between versions were being used I reinstalled all of Neodesk 4 and still the same thing. Do anyone have any ideas what's going on?"

Rob Mahlert tells Bud:

"Have you tried updating to .005 from .004?

http://www4.pair.com/gribnif/updates.htm

If not, last I heard they are still 'supporting' the software. Won't hurt to ask!"

Ken Springer asks for help with file conversions:

"It's been months since I've visited this newsgroup. Not for wanting to be here, but because I moved. Since then, I've yet to get a single computer system completely reassembled.

Sadly, that includes both my TT and Hades.

Now I find myself need some Outline Art and CVG (Calamus) files converted for work. So today I hurriedly set up the TT to convert them, and the boot disk is either dead or something else is wrong with the TT. (Hard drive spins but nothing but a blank desktop.) And I don't have the time today to set up the Hades. Besides, I know the software I need is on

the TT as that is where I created the files, but the software may not be on the Hades.

But I was smart, way back then, and put the actual files on a Zip disk.

The files can be found at http://www.greeleynet.com/~wordwork/Friends/. This will give you a directory with 3 *.ol and 2 *.cvg files.

I would appreciate it if anyone could convert those files to WMF (windows metafiles) and send them to this email address before Monday morning Colorado, USA time. GEM files might be OK, but I've got to go through some boxes of books to find my Corel Draw 4 manual. If I find the manual, I'll have the serial number and can install CD 4 on this Windows 98 machine and then convert to WMF from there.

But WMF is really the preferred file format with the short time I have to deal with the issue."

George Nakos tells Ken:

"A google search led me to this: http://www.pl32.com/ which (supposedly) reads CVG and GEM files. You might want to give it a try."

Rory McMahon adds:

"Just a guess, maybe a corrupt desktop file. See if you can boot from another floppy (ICD, HDDriver) and rename/delete the desktop file.

This has happened to me before and sometimes it works."

Ken replies:

"Or it could be a corrupt HDDRIVER.SYS file, or a bad hard drive. Been through this all before.

Thanks for the suggestion, tho'.

I've got the floppy somewhere in all the computer stuff I've not sorted out since moving. And I got around the conversion problem a different way."

Sam F. asks about gaming on a CT60:

"Are there ANY games, besides card games, tile games, etc., that CT060 Falcons can play?"

Matt Smith muses:

"Its about time someone compiled a list of all playable games for the CT60, when i get mine sorted out I'll have a crack at it."

Rodolphe Czuba adds:

"I have a list of games that were tested on CT60.

I just sent it to you...
I will take time to put it online..."

Check Rodolphe's site (http://www.czuba-tech.com) every so-often, folks.

Bill Freeman asks about replacing an ST's floppy:

"Can someone point me to some good instructions for converting PC floppy drives for use in an ST?

I have had two of my original ST drives go junk on me recently. I'm wondering if maybe my ancient floppys are starting to shed their magnetic coating and that is gumming up the heads. I know that happens with old audio tapes.

Any tips on how to clean the heads without damaging them?"

'Egon' tells Bill:

"All you have to do is set the drive select to be "0" rather than "1".

Usually one of three ways:
A simple switch.
A set of jumpers.
A solder bridge.

[For cleaning the read/write head] If it is just good on the heads then a stock head cleaning disc with accompanying cleaning fluid will do the job.

If you have the early ST FDD with a worm drive for head movement, check that the worm isn't full of crud too."

Hallvard Tangeraas adds:

"And flipping the floppy cable connector upside-down (first, cut off the notch that prevents this from being done).
You might also have to mess around with the disk-detect switch, at least I had to do both these things in addition to the 0/1 select, and I've documented the whole thing here with text and illustrations:

ftp://gem.win.co.nz/hall/hardware/sony_144.zip

I assume that most of the stuff in there can be applied for other standard PC type floppy disk drives as well."

Egon tells Hallvard:

"I've never yet had a drive with an inverse cable set-up. Pin 1 on the cable has always gone to pin 1 on the drive. Have you seen many with inverse wiring?"

Hallvard tells Egon:

"I discussed these things extensively here a few years ago when I was

trying to figure it all out. As with the VGA monitor cable there wasn't
any fully compiled and ready to use information on the subject of using
high density floppy disk drives with the ST, so I asked around and
created the mentioned file. Everybody told me that I had to invert the
cable connector, and this was my experience as well, with the Sony
drives that I've used.
Being standard PC floppy drives I can't understand why other standard PC
drives would be any different.

The original Atari ST drives on the other hand weren't completely
standard as far as I know, which is why this had to be done."

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time,
same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Sony Increasing PSP Shipments!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""   Tekken 5 Ships! 'Tween' Rating!
                                     Dragon Ball Z: Sagas!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News   - The Latest Gaming News!
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

             Sony Says Increasing PSP Shipments to N. America

Sony Corp. will put 1 million PSP portable video game players on North
American retail shelves for its March 24 launch, the company said on
Tuesday, a figure double what some analysts had expected.

Sony Computer Entertainment of America had previously said 1 million PSPs
would be manufactured for North America by March 31, but it acknowledged
many of those units would be spread around the supply chain, from factories
to distribution to warehouses.

The PSP launched in Japan last December and remains in extremely limited
supply there, having shipped nearly 1.2 million units to date. Sony
maintained its forecast for shipping 3 million PSPs worldwide by the end
of its fiscal year in March.

A spokesman for SCEA, Sony's video game business in the United States,
could not immediately say exactly what Sony was doing to meet increased

demand. Last year, when its PlayStation 2 console was in short supply, Sony resorted to shipping the units to the United States from China via air freight, a costly option that cuts into margins.

The PSP will retail for $249 at launch in a bundle with a number of accessories and the movie "Spider-Man 2" on UMD, a new disc format developed specifically for the PSP.

"We believe that this device will be hot, will be in demand, in short supply, and generate interest in overall handheld gaming," American Technology Research analyst P.J. McNealy said in a note.

The PSP is Sony's first major venture into handheld video gaming, a market dominated since 1989 by Nintendo Co. Ltd. and its Game Boy line.

Namco Ships Tekken 5 For Playstation 2

Leading video games developer and publisher Namco Hometek Inc. announced the next installment in its revered fighting franchise, Tekken 5, has shipped to North American retail outlets. With its variety of characters, amazing graphics and unprecedented number of modes to commemorate its 10-year anniversary, Tekken 5 promises to deliver the most exciting gameplay experience ever seen in the Tekken franchise. Developed exclusively for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system by Namco Ltd. in Japan, Tekken 5 is rated T for Teen and carries an MSRP at retail of $49.99.

"Tekken 5 encourages franchise fans and newcomers alike to experience the next generation of fighting genre game play," said Yoshi Niki, Business Unit Director with Namco Hometek Inc. "Tekken 5"s unparalleled combination of customizable characters, interactive environments and brand new fighting engine is a must-have for gamers this year."

Tekken 5 brings back the popular cast of characters from the previous Tekken games, along with three new characters " Asuka Kazama, Raven and Feng Wei, for a total of 20 default characters to start and more to unlock as players progress in the game. The players are able to use their fight money to customize these characters with various accessories such as hats, glasses and an assortment of different costumes. The new characters are equipped with their own fighting styles such as Feng Wei"s Chinese Kempo, and the returning characters" signature attacks have been updated with new moves and combos. In addition, Tekken 5 offers players a bonus action adventure game called "Tekken: Devil Within," which unfolds a side story to the game"s action-packed fighting sequences. Tekken 5 also includes the arcade modes of Tekken 1 through 3, which marks the first time these games are playable on the PlayStation2 and offers the ultimate 10th anniversary package for Tekken fans.

Namco has also partnered with Hori (U.S.A.), Inc., a Japan-based peripherals manufacturer, to offer a limited edition premium bundle set to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the fighting franchise. The bundle retails for $99.99 and includes a copy of the game, a Hori customized peripheral and a special six-disc collectors DVD case for storage of all games in the Tekken franchise.

Atari's Dragon Ball Z: Sagas Goes Gold

Atari, Inc. announced that development is complete on Dragon Ball Z: Sagas, the first Dragon Ball Z action game for console systems, which will be available March 22 for PlayStation2 computer entertainment system, Nintendo GameCube, and the Xbox video game system from Microsoft. Since its introduction, the Dragon Ball Z video game franchise has sold through more than eight million units in the U.S., and the TV series is consistently ranked as one of the top-rated shows on Cartoon Network's Toonami Block. The release of Sagas coincides with FUNimation Productions' re-release of the first 67 episodes of Dragon Ball Z on home video.

"We are excited to deliver Dragon Ball Z¾: Sagas because it represents many 'firsts' for the franchise" said Matt Collins, Director of Brand Marketing for Atari. "It's the brand's first action-adventure game, first multi-platform launch, and the first DBZ title for the Xbox. Most of all, though, we are thrilled to give consumers something they have wanted for some time: a DBZ action game that allows players to go just about anywhere in the DBZ world."

Developed by Avalanche Software, Dragon Ball Z: Sagas offers fans and newcomers alike the opportunity to explore destructible DBZ environments and use their superhero abilities to complete exciting missions based on the first-half of the animated series - from the Saiyan Saga through the Cell Games. The game is packed with exciting features. It includes several gameplay modes, including multi-player co-op, exciting missions that are based on never-before-seen aspects of the animated series, a host of playable characters such as Goku, Piccolo, and Vegeta, and a lineup of infamous bosses including Frieza, Cell and Raditz.

Rated 'T' for Teen, Dragon Ball Z: Sagas will ship on March 22 for a suggested retail price of $49.99 on PlayStation 2 and Xbox and $39.99 on Nintendo GameCube. All three versions should be available for purchase at retail stores on March 25.

Gaming Industry Adopts New Tween Rating

The ratings board for the video game industry announced a new category Wednesday for children approaching their teens.

The "E10+" category should help fill a gap between games rated "E" for everyone, which some children outgrow, and "T" for teen, which are too violent or mature for some parents' tastes.

It might bring relief to households like the Pattons, who live in the San Francisco suburb of Belmont.

A big fan of Mario Bros. video games, 9-year-old Nicholas Patton is itching to play "Super Smash Bros. Melee." But to his dismay, his parents have declared the "T"-rated game off-limits. The disagreement has sparked incessant requests and some tense moments.

With the new category, the game, which includes a little more violence than other Mario-based games, might have gotten a permissible "E10+" instead. At the least, it could bring more choices to parents and their young children, who often don't see eye-to-eye when it comes to the form of entertainment

that has infiltrated millions of American households.

"In that age group, you're left in the middle," said the boy's father, Paul Patton. "Unless you're into the sports games, the "E" games aren't that exciting anymore for him, and as for the "T" ones - your concept of reality isn't totally there yet."

Ratings, which range from "EC" for early childhood to "AO" for adults only, are meant to be a guide and certainly are not always in line with parents' views.

But the Entertainment Software Rating Board, a self-regulatory body set up by the gaming industry, believes the new "E10+" label will come in handy for parents, especially because the organization has seen an increasing number of games getting a "T" rating, perhaps because of mild violence, when the titles could be considered suitable for a 10-year-old.

"We found we were putting games we thought were preteen in the teen category," said Patricia Vance, president of the board. "And with the levels of sophistication in game play and graphics now, we felt there was enough nuance in the range of games to warrant a new category between 'E' and 'T.'"

The "E10+" rating means the video game may be suitable for children 10 and older. The title might contain moderate amounts of cartoon, fantasy or mild violence; mild profanity or minimally suggestive themes.

Likely candidates might be racing games with more extreme car crashes or games with super heroes or cartoon characters - cute as they may be - involved in some fighting, Vance said.

Though existing games won't be reclassified, ones that might have qualified as "E10+" include "Super Smash Bros. Melee," "Shrek," "Ratchet and Clank," and "Jak II," she said.

Two upcoming games already set to receive the new rating are "Donkey Kong Jungle Beat," in which the gorillas have to fight each other a bit more than other Donkey Kong games, and a game based on Tim Burton's "The Nightmare Before Christmas." Vance said the latter is "on the scary side - something you might not want a 6-year-old to see but nothing that most preteens can't handle."

The underlying theory is that not all children are created equal: There are very distinct developmental differences in the ages of 6, 10, and 13.

Just as in real life, "you don't go from child to teen in one leap," said Ralph Lopez, a Cornell clinical pediatrics professor with whom the rating board consulted.

What counts as humorous for a 6-year-old will often be passe for a 10-year-old, Lopez said. A car hitting a tree could be terrifying for the younger set but humorous for a tween.

Another difference comes when the line between fantasy and reality is better understood, usually during the teen years. Hence, any game that depicts real injuries - versus unrealistic physical recoveries - gets at least a "T" rating.

Language is also a key issue, and the rating board examines not only the script of games but accompanying song lyrics.

The rating board recruits people - without any game industry ties - to review video games before they hit store shelves.

About 53 percent of the games sold in the United States in 2004 were rated "E," according to the board, though data analyzed by GamerMetrics and IGN.com show that only 46 percent of all games sold in 2004 were rated "E," with the bulk of sales in "T" and "M."

A random, telephone-based survey conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates last year found that about 70 percent of parents refer to the ratings every time they buy a game.

Count the Pattons among them. Their generous collection of 50-plus video games for their two sons, ages 5 and 9, are all rated "E" - except for one "T" game that a relative gave to Nicholas as a gift and is being stored in a closet until the fifth grader comes of age.

Among their concerns: limiting exposure to violence and more mature language.

Sure, even some Disney movies now include words that were unacceptable on the big screen 30 years ago, but it's another matter if the word is repeated 45 times in 30 minutes, Nicholas' father said.

"I don't feel we're rigid," said his mother, Kim Patton, "but we do feel we have to have limits. Nicholas has the whole rest of his life to be exposed to things."

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Senate Democrat Introduces Phishing Bill

A senior Senate Democrat on Tuesday introduced legislation to impose tough penalties against persons convicted of launching "phishing" scams - a form of online fraud in which criminals use deception to trick computer users into giving up their personal and financial information.

The Anti-Phishing Act of 2005, sponsored by Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (Vt.), would allow prosecutors to impose fines of up to $250,000 and jail terms of up to five years against anyone convicted of creating fake corporate Web sites and fraudulent e-mail messages designed to fleece consumers. The legislation would prevent online parodies and political speech from being prosecuted as phishing.

The Leahy bill also would apply its penalties to a form of phishing sometimes called "pharming," which involves using computer programming tricks to redirect Internet users from a legitimate site to a counterfeit version operated by criminals.

Leahy is the ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, the panel that will decide whether his bill should be referred to the full Senate for a vote.

Dave Jevans, chairman of the Anti-Phishing Working Group, said the Leahy bill would allow investigators to prosecute scam artists before they send out phishing e-mails.

"Right now, you can use copyright, trademark and other civil laws to sue people who are creating phishing sites, but that can take months," Jevans said. "What [the Leahy bill] means is that if you're building a site called 'eBay-security.net' with the intent to defraud people, then [law enforcement] can go after you just for that."

The legislation comes in the midst of a substantial increase in the number of phishing attacks, as documented by security experts. More than 12,800 new and unique phishing e-mails were reported in January, a 42 percent increase over December, according to a report released last week by the Anti-Phishing Working Group (APWG), a coalition of banks and technology companies. The APWG tracked 2,560 phishing Web sites in January, a 47 percent increase from one month earlier and more than double the number of scam sites spotted in October.

Estimates of consumer losses to phishing scams range from a few hundred million dollars to more than a billion dollars each year. According to experts, phishing scams often lead to identity theft and other crimes that can haunt consumers for years. Roughly three to five percent of people who receive phishing scams take the bait, the APWG said.

"Traditional wire fraud and identity theft statutes are not sufficient to respond to phishing," Leahy said in a statement. "We need to act aggressively to keep them from eroding the public's trust in online commerce and communication."

Security experts praised the legislation's intent, but voiced concern that it may do little to deter phishing attacks, most of which originate outside of the country. Roughly 68 percent of all phishing sites are hosted on computers located in other nations and thus outside the reach of U.S. law, the APWG found.

"To the extent that there are laws that make current [phishing] activities illegal, they have been ineffective because of jurisdictional problems," said Chuck Wade, project leader for the Financial Services Technology Consortium, an industry group made up of financial institutions, technology providers, research groups and government agencies.

Marcus Sachs, a former cyber-security adviser to President George W. Bush, said the Leahy bill shows Congress is feeling the pressure to help fix a highly complex and visible problem. Still, Sachs said, it is unclear whether new criminal laws are the solution.

"As soon as you start enacting new Internet-specific laws you open up the door for continued regulation and control over the Internet," Sachs said. "So far, the Internet has been violently successful following a largely unregulated road, so if the current laws are applicable here, we ought to be using those first."

House lawmakers have not issued a companion measure to the Leahy bill, but legislation introduced last month designed to combat intrusive computer

programs known as "spyware" would earmark an additional $10 million in funding for the Justice Department to investigate and prosecute spyware and phishing scams.

Court Overturns $521 Million Ruling Against Microsoft

A federal appeals court on Wednesday overturned a $521 million patent infringement ruling against Microsoft Corp., the world's largest software maker, and ordered that the case be retried in a lower court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit said that the original verdict, which found that parts of Microsoft's Internet Explorer Web browser had infringed on technology developed by privately held firm Eolas Technologies Inc. and the University of California, had ignored two of Microsoft's key arguments.

A year ago, Microsoft had also won a ruling by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, which invalidated a claim by the plaintiffs to the browser technology that allows other mini-applications to work with Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

"We have maintained throughout this process that the Eolas patent is not valid and today's ruling is a clear affirmation of our position," Microsoft spokeswoman Stacy Drake said in a statement.

Martin Lueck, the lawyer heading the business litigation group at Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi LLP that represented Eolas, was not immediately available for comment.

Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft said it was looking forward to presenting its case again. No date has been set for a retrial.

In Wednesday's ruling by the Appeals Court judges, they said "this court vacates the district court's decisions and remands for further proceedings on these issues," according to court documents.

Yahoo! Set to Celebrate 10th Anniversary

Co-founders Jerry Yang and David Filo parlayed Yahoo Inc. from a college hobby into a full-time job 10 years ago, but the Internet icon was never quite comfortable with the happy-go-lucky mood of the dot-com boom.

It's not that Yang and Filo don't like to have fun. After all, they gave their company a name often associated with rubes and adopted a joyful yodel as their calling card.

"We were certainly not sophisticated or civilized," Yang joked during an interview with The Associated Press ahead of the March 2 anniversary of Yahoo's inception.

What separated Yahoo's creators from the rest of the dot-com crowd was their desire to create a profitable business as quickly as possible - a contrarian concept back in those days of economic delirium.

The philosophy enabled Yahoo to begin making money in less than 10 months, and also fueled the Sunnyvale-based company's resounding comeback from the dot-com bust that obliterated hundreds of other Internet businesses.

"We have always built the company around profitability," Yang said. "When we're not profitable, it's terrible."

The partners discovered early on that being frugal isn't necessarily boring. One reason Yahoo's offices have always been painted in vibrant purple-and-yellow is because they were the cheapest colors available.

"They have always been more interested in pouring money into developing new products than spending frivolously on decorations and office supplies," said Erin Moore, a Yahoo product manager who joined the company in April 1996 when there were just 50 employees.

Yang, 36, and Filo, 38, became billionaires long ago, but they have stuck around as the "Chief Yahoos" at the Sunnyvale-based company because they are eager to continue innovating and increasing profits.

"It's immensely more challenging to get to $10 billion in revenue than it was to get to $10 million in revenue," Filo said. "That's why we are still here today. The problems have gotten harder, the challenges have gotten bigger and it's gotten more exciting."

Yahoo has grown from a handful of employees to more than 7,600 workers today, but Moore said the company's "work hard, play hard" culture has remained intact.

In between the long hours required to run the world's most popular Web destination, Yahoo's employees unwind by playing basketball, volleyball, bocce ball and even dodgeball at the corporate campus.

There's a similar ethic going on a few miles to the north at Google Inc., a fierce rival that Yang and Filo helped inspire. Yahoo doesn't pamper its workers as extravagantly as Google, which feeds its employees breakfast, lunch and dinner and even arranges to have their oil changed for free.

No one eats for free at Yahoo, although the company subsidizes the cafeteria prices. Yahoo is also inviting all registered users in the United States to download a coupon for a free scoop of ice cream on March 2 from Baskin-Robbins in celebration of its 10th anniversary.

Yahoo's profit-conscious approach has paid off handsomely, particularly for its founders. Filo still owns 6.4 percent of Yahoo's stock - a stake worth $2.8 billion. Having sold more of his holdings through the years, Yang owns a 4.8 percent stake worth $2.1 billion.

Yahoo already has amassed an audience of 345 million, including 165 million registered users who rely on the company's Web sites for e-mail, e-commerce, news, entertainment, driving directions, matchmaking, weather forecasts, job leads and search results.

The company believes it can become an even more vital information and entertainment hub as wireless and broadband technology changes how people interact with media, but Yahoo's leadership on the Internet isn't necessarily secure. Google, which got $10 million in early financing from Yahoo, looms as a formidable threat, and Microsoft Corp.'s MSN and Time Warner Inc.'s AOL have also ramped up their Web portals.

Yang and Filo are used to skeptics - they've been shadowed by doubters ever since they began compiling a list of their favorite Web sites while procrastinating on their electrical engineering graduate work at Stanford University.

"People gave us no chance of success 10 years ago," Filo said. "We have a lot of competition as always, but now we have got ourselves in a leadership position where our future success is really up to us."

Yahoo wasn't the Internet's first commercial success - that honor went to Web browser pioneer Netscape Communications Inc., which became a division of AOL after being crushed by Microsoft. But Yahoo remains among the small handful of still-influential survivors from the dot-com mania's early days.

"Yahoo really defined an era," said technology industry analyst Rob Enderle, who has followed Yahoo since it started. "They are the ones who set the tone for the Internet."

And Yahoo still defines the Net experience for latest generation of Web surfers, people like Jeremy Alicandri, 22, who have grown up with Yahoo.

While he was still in high school, he used $800 of his savings to start an online store, simplycheap.com, through Yahoo's e-commerce channel. The site now has eight employees and $2.4 million in annual sales, Alicandri said.

"Yahoo is the Internet to me. I do almost everything through them," he said.

Neither Yang nor Filo thought they would have such a big impact when they raised their first $1 million to fund the startup and hired technology industry veteran Tim Koogle as chief executive. Yahoo's initial public offering of stock in April 1996 helped fuel the gold rush psychology that spawned dozens of Internet startups flush with venture capital.

Much of that money was spent advertising on Yahoo's Web site, pushing the company's annual sales above $1 billion and its market value beyond $120 billion.

"We felt things were probably a little too good," Yang said. "You could see things were a little too frothy."

Then came the crash. One-third of Yahoo's revenue evaporated in a single year, saddling the company with a succession of quarterly losses. Its market value shrank to $4.6 billion at one point.

Determined to stop the bleeding, Yang and Filo recruited entertainment industry veteran Terry Semel to replace Koogle in May 2001. The shakeup included hundreds of layoffs, amplifying talk that Yahoo was being cleaned up for a desperation sale.

Semel is widely credited for engineering Yahoo's comeback by creating new subscription services to diversify Yahoo's revenue beyond advertising, and about $2.5 billion in acquisitions have added more firepower to the company's arsenal. The turnaround produced an $840 million profit on sales of $3.57 billion last year, lifting Yahoo's market value back to about $50 billion.

It wouldn't have happened, Semel said, without Yang and Filo.

"They are the pioneers, the guys who have made it possible for us to do the

things that had never been done before," Semel said. "But it's not like
they walk into work acting like this is the company that they started. They
are always looking at what they can do as part of the team to make Yahoo
more relevant in people's lives."

                        AOL Gives Web Mail a Makeover

America Online is preparing to launch a "new and improved" Web mail service
for its vast e-mail customer base.

The new version of AOL Mail on the Web marks the latest in a series of
feature boosts designed to provide members with broader access to their
mail accounts.

Mail on the Web has a redesigned interface that displays new messages as
they arrive, says company spokesperson Jaymelina Esmele. Users can create
folders and use new drag-and-drop functionality to organize messages.
Integration with instant messaging has been improved, allowing customers
to respond to an e-mail via IM.

E-mail storage on AOL s servers can be accessed from any Web-enabled
computer, and a search feature helps customers locate new, old or sent
messages.

The new AOL Mail on the Web is based on technology from Mailblocks, a
consumer Web-based e-mail service acquired by America Online in July 2004.

 We are paving the way for free Web mail service with the goal of serving
a much wider audience, Esemele told NewsFactor. Existing customers can now
preview the service, which has been given a significant performance boost.

In December, AOL began beta testing Mail on the Web with a small number of
subscribers as the company sought to counter mounting competition from
Yahoo, MSN and Google.

The battle for free e-mail highlights not only the falling cost of storage
capacity, but also a rush to direct customers to portals and search
services that can generate revenue.

 The Internet portal and search-engine market, in general, is becoming
increasingly competitive, Yankee Group analyst Patrick Mahoney told
NewsFactor. All of them are looking for any way to differentiate
themselves, to garner more customers or keep current customers satisfied.

Within the space of a few months, free e-mail with large amounts of storage
has become the de facto minimum standard for Internet content providers,
which is not necessarily good news for the companies.

E-mail accounts, at one time, were considered a revenue source for these
providers, Mahoney noted. The premium accounts still will generate income,
of course, but given the storage now vailable for free, the paying accounts
will represent a much smaller portion of revenue.

                      AOL Releases Delayed Netscape Beta

America Online this week released the first public test version of Netscape 8, a new Web browser with features designed to protect users against online scams and malicious code.

The beta release was originally scheduled for mid-February, but was delayed to fix some last-minute bugs. A preview version of the browser has been available to a select group of testers since late November. The Netscape 8 beta version differs significantly from that preview.

With the release of Netscape 8 beta, AOL is taking aim at Microsoft's dominant Internet Explorer Web browser, which has been the subject of many security vulnerabilities. Also, AOL is looking to piggyback on the popularity of Firefox, the open source Web browser that was released in November and has since been downloaded about 27 million times.

The Netscape 8 browser includes features that are meant to protect users while surfing the Web. For example, the browser adjusts settings based on a list of known malicious Web sites to protect users from phishing scams. Also, trusted Web sites are displayed with fewer restrictions and use the IE rendering engine for maximum compatibility.

IE is part of Windows and is used by most Web users. Many Web sites have been designed specifically to work with the Microsoft browser and may not be displayed correctly in browsers using other engines, including the Gecko engine in Firefox. For example, movie site Movielink.com does not work well in Firefox.

Netscape 8 is based on Firefox and uses that browser's rendering engine by default, but also supports the IE browser engine. The Netscape browser doesn't include the IE engine but uses the engine in Windows. As a result, the Netscape 8 browser only works on Windows computers.

In an about-face, Microsoft two weeks ago said it would release a beta of a new IE browser during the middle of this year. Previously, the company had said it would not release a new browser until it ships the next version of Windows, code-named Longhorn, in 2006. There has not been a new version of IE in four years. The new IE 7.0 will also address security issues such as phishing, Microsoft says.

Phishing scams are a prevalent type of online attack that typically combines spam e-mail messages and fraudulent Web pages that look like legitimate e-commerce sites. The attacks are designed to steal sensitive information such as user names, passwords, and credit card numbers.

Netscape was the most popular browser in the early years of the Web. AOL is now breathing new life into the Netscape browser, which was marginalized after Microsoft introduced IE in the mid-1990s. The final version of Netscape 8 is expected out in the second quarter and will be backed by some marketing efforts from AOL, sources familiar with the company's plan have said.

Hydrogen: The Next Fuel For Laptops?

A small New Jersey company is working on a hydrogen-fueled battery that it hopes will eventually provide eight hours of power for laptop computers.

At Intel's Developer Forum in San Francisco on Tuesday, Millennium Cell demonstrated an IBM ThinkPad running on a prototype of the battery. Most notebook computers today can run for three or four hours on a fully charged battery. So far, Millennium Cell's runs for only three hours, but the goal is to increase that performance to eight hours.

Many companies are looking for ways to boost the longevity of laptop batteries, including a slew of start-ups that Intel has invested in.

And big laptop makers like Toshiba, NEC and others are working on fuel cell technology, mostly based on methanol. Casio, Sony and Samsung are developing fuel cell technology as well. Canon recently presented a paper at a symposium in Japan discussing a prototype of a hydrogen-powered micro fuel cell for video cameras and other devices.

Millennium Cell's product is unusual in that it uses hydrogen and sodium borohydride. In its current state, the Millennium Cell battery looks a bit like a science project. The company outfitted an IBM ThinkPad laptop with a fuel cell that is 6 millimeters thick. The fuel cell fits across the top of the notebook casing. In the future, the fuel cell would be designed inside the laptop's casing.

A cartridge a little larger than a cassette tape provides the fuel and is attached to the laptop by a thin tube. The tube plugs into the slot for the power cord on the laptop.

The battery works by initially storing sodium borohydride as a solution in the cartridge. This solution passes through a fuel pump and moves into a catalyst chamber, which triggers a reaction.

The reaction causes hydrogen to be released from the liquid fuel. The hydrogen then moves to the fuel cell in the laptop, where it mixes with oxygen. Oxygen is let into the laptop through a series of perforated holes in the laptop casing. The reaction of hydrogen and oxygen creates electricity. Water is a byproduct of this reaction, but the water leaves the fuel cell as a vapor, said Adam Briggs, a Millennium senior vice president.

For now, the possibility of a hydrogen-fueled laptop battery is still at least two years off. Millennium, based in Eatontown, N.J., came to Intel's conference to make contacts with personal computer makers who might want to incorporate the technology into future laptop designs.

Millennium Cell said its goal is to make a battery that will cost PC makers about $25. It would sell the battery as an extra battery to consumers for about $150, the price of a standard secondary laptop battery.

''If we can keep the cost south of $75 in terms of cost to the manufacturers, we should be in pretty good shape,'' Briggs said.

On Monday, the company announced a joint venture with Dow Chemical to collaborate on developing and commercializing portable fuel cells for use by consumers and the military.

''We want to help take it from a science-project-like product to a real product,'' said Chris McDougall, Dow's program manager for portable energy in Midland, Mich.

As part of the agreement, Dow Chemical is buying an equity interest in Millennium equal to 3 percent of the company, with an option to buy up to

19.9 percent of Millennium Cell.

Millennium Cell initially focused on fuel cell batteries for cars. But in 2003, with costs for fuel cell batteries for cars still too high, the company decided to switch to batteries for portable devices. It has also been developing prototype battery packs for the U.S. Air Force.

Senators Want Tax Breaks for Proper Computer Disposal

Two U.S. senators today introduced legislation that would give tax breaks to individuals and businesses that safely dispose of computers and other worn-out electronic devices.

The Electronic Waste Recycling and Promotion and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 would create incentives for a nationwide recycling infrastructure for computers, monitors, and television sets, say Senators Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and Jim Talent (R-Missouri).

The electronic-waste recycling bill would establish an $8-per-piece tax credit for companies that recycle at least 5000 monitors or computer units per year. Individuals who use qualified recyclers to dispose of computers or TV sets would receive a $15 tax credit. The bill would also prohibit the disposal of any electronic equipment containing a display screen greater than 4 inches or any computer system in a municipal solid-waste landfill, beginning three years after the bill is passed.

The prohibition would take effect only if the administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finds that a majority of U.S. households have reasonable access to e-waste recycling.

Wyden, in a statement, noted that old computers contain a number of hazardous toxins, including lead, mercury, and cadmium, and some experts estimate that more than 150 million tons of electronic equipment were thrown away in 2004. Some states have e-waste recycling programs, but a national program does not exist.

"Growing mountains of e-waste are clogging our nation's landfills and posing great risks to Americans' health and to our natural environment," Wyden said in the statement. "As technology improves and folks get newer and faster computers, they need a safe and easy way to get rid of their old machines."

The National Recycling Coalition, the Environmental Technology Council, the Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition, Waste Management Corporation, Hewlett-Packard, and Intel have all expressed support for the bill, according to Wyden.

Mac Pioneer Jef Raskin Dies

Jef Raskin, head of the team that created the original Apple Macintosh, has died. He was 61 years old and recently had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

The multi-talented Raskin was a leading thinker in the field of interface

design - the way that software engineers tailor computer code to interact
with human beings.

"He was a pioneer," Yankee Group's Mike Goodman told NewsFactor. "He helped
to develop a new market." And that market is the multi-billion-dollar
industry we refer to today as personal computing.

"Raskin is one of a handful of people who can be credited with developing
the role of the computer in society today," Goodman noted.

While other companies had introduced early versions of computers designed
to be used by individuals - hence the "personal" in personal computer -
Apple was the first company to make the devices accessible to people not
specially trained to use them.

Raskin is credited with the now-ubiquitous click-and-drag feature of
personal computer operating systems. And, of course, in order to click and
drag, a user needs a mouse. Apple popularized that navigational tool as
well.

Apple went on to take its early models with such innovative navigation
methods to the youth market, becoming an early and dominant player in the
educational computing field. It was a move that firmly entrenched the
company in the marketplace, though battles for market share later would
become heated.

Still, the features that Raskin and his fellow Macintosh designers
developed allowed the computer to be used easily in classrooms, and spawned
a generation of computer-literate adults who would go on to find new ways
to apply the technology in their personal and professional lives.

"You introduce something to a youth or teen market and that group becomes
comfortable with it and keeps the behavior later on - this is a
tried-and-true method for introducing technology now," Goodman said.

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